**A.4.1 - School Librarian Interview Notes**

SLIS Student’s Name: Kathleen McKim

State-Certified School Librarian’s Name: Ms. Mary Cripps

School Visited: Al Bayan Bilingual School (Elementary Library)

Date and Time of Visit: March 18, 2012, 8-10 am

Title(s) and Number of Library Professional Staff: Elementary School Media Specialist (1)

Title(s) of Library Paraprofessional Staff: None

Number of Student Aides: None

Number of Adult Volunteers: None

**You will turn in these notes with the A.4.1 Technology Tools Evaluation, Part II Rubric. Review both A.4.1 and A.4.2 Technology Plan Rubric BEFORE the interview. These are questions that will support you in completing A.4.1 and A.4.2.**

**Technology for Circulation and Collection Management Software**

**Required** Questions

1. What circulation/collection management system is in use?

Sirsi Dynix Symphony Work Flows 3.4.0J. The link to the OPAC is <http://library.bbs.edu.kw>.

1. How does the system interface with student attendance information? (When they interface, librarians/library assistants do not have to enter student data into the circulation system.)

It does not directly interface with the current registrar’s system. The tech from Arabian Advanced Systems (the local vendor for Symphony) migrates data from the registrar in August at the beginning of each school year.

*Follow-up Question: How do the students get their library IDs?* The librarian uses the student ID numbers which have been assigned to them by the registrar. Once the data has been migrated, it is possible to see the class the students belong to, but it is buried a few screens down in Work Flows. I print bar codes and manually create and laminate library “cards” for each student. I put each class homeroom together on one ring so I can find the students quickly when they check out books.

1. What are its most user-friendly features?

According to Mary, there are NONE. This system is not user-friendly in the least, especially when compared to Follett.

1. What are its least user-friendly features?

The visual search is not appropriate for Elementary School students . The system is not fully operational [meaning that some promised functions simply do not work when you click on them]. It is not customizable for each library, as had been promised by the vendor. 528 tags are not searchable. There is no self-checkout. The kids cannot scan their own books.

1. What types of tasks do the librarian and library assistant perform with this software?

There is not a library assistant. The librarian uses this system to locate books, catalog, and to create circulation and other reports.

1. What types of tasks do the library student aides and adult volunteers perform with this software?

There are no student aides. There was one grandmother who used to volunteer, but she was not able to use the system.

1. What features are especially successful in supporting student learning and educator teaching?

There is nothing in this software that supports student learning or educator teaching. Theoretically, teachers could perform advanced searches or power searches; however the librarian does not have the ability to add searchable tags (see additional questions below). In theory, teachers can also request books, but as the OPAC is not very user-friendly, PD will need to be provided in order to help teachers learn to do this.

*Follow-up Question: What about teaching students library skills, such as using the OPAC?* I am not going to do it. The system stinks. Kids won’t understand or use it.

1. How does the librarian access student achievement data?

The librarian is not given/does not have access to student achievement data.

**Additional** Questions:

1. *Let’s talk a little bit about this issue of tagging. What is it that you are doing to help teachers and students find the books they need in the catalog and on the shelves?*

As far as local tags, the 528 tag was not searchable in the OPAC. 521 is for reading levels, but it’s not searchable by teachers unless they know how to enter it (ex. 3.2{521} and (Fic {082} or {090})). This is like a code for them, and they don’t have the training to search this way. The series of books comes up in the OPAC under 440, but I had to “bastardize” the 440 to include Caldecott and Newbery Awards. It should be in the 528—I know that, but I have to use the 440 because that’s how teachers can access it through the OPAC. Given that this is a new system, and we were promised we would have more control over issues such as this, it shouldn’t be happening, but I have to make it work anyway. This is not a shortcoming of the system overall, as I have seen Sirsi work for other libraries, including my home library in the states; rather it is a problem with the way our system is installed. In another example, I had a teacher who wanted to know all of the books we had on “Diversity” in our library. This information should be in a 900 tag. However in Symphony, the 900s are not searchable through the OPAC. Instead, I had to go through each item manually, add a note for “Diversity” in the item itself, and then have the technician from the company run a report for these books based on the items and not the MARC records. There needs to be a way in the system that is like the folksonomy tags used in Library Thing. That way, we can make a cross-over matrix to match books by subject areas and curriculum areas. A teacher could go in and search the catalog by folksonomy or “popular” keywords to find what matches their needs.

1. *Regardless of what the librarian’s role in teacher collaboration is supposed to be, how do you see yourself collaborating with teachers on a day-to-day basis?*

I do not collaborate with teachers. I was afraid they were going to ask me to put the F&P [Fountas & Pinnell] Reading Level stickers on the books. I’m glad they didn’t. I would have quit.

1. *How did your library end up with the cataloging system that is currently being used?*

We had Horizon, and when we bought it at least 5 years ago, we were promised that it would be upgraded to Symphony soon. Over 5 years, this didn’t happen. I think they finally had to upgrade it because I heard that Horizon was so old that they were phasing out tech support for it. Even though the librarians tried to get Follett, they were not listened to. The final decision came down to administrative politics, money, incompetence (or at least lack of understanding of librarian needs), and disinterest.

1. *Can you blame any of the shortcomings of the system on the fact that it is a dual-language system?*

No, I don’t because I am sure there are bilingual systems on Symphony that offer Spanish and English that operate without any problems. The problem is with the way Symphony has been set up for us.

**Observation**

1. Who is using the circulation/collection management system while you are in the library and what are they doing with it?

No one was using it. Only the librarian uses it, and she was talking to me at the time. There are not any OPAC computers for students or teachers.

**A.4.2 - School Librarian Interview Notes**

**Technology Planning**

**Required** Questions

1. Can you share and comment on your Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) or Internet Use Policy (IUP)?

No. We do not have one at our school.

1. Did you have input into this document? Do you manage the distribution or collection of this document? If you could change something about this document, what would it be?

We need to get one.

1. Do you or did you serve on a technology planning committee at the building or district level?

No, but the high school librarian does.

1. If so, what was/is your role and what types of input did/do you offer?

N/A

1. What were/are the committee’s considerations during the planning process?

N/A

1. What is your opinion of the results?

N/A

**Additional** Questions:

1. There is no doubt that you are very capable of being a technology planner at your school, do you feel that your lack of involvement is reflective of you as a librarian?

Not really. I inherited a library that wasn’t even cataloged, so I know there are so many things that I need to do that should be happening, but my first priority was to catalog the books. Our principal was new as well, so she’s been so busy with other issues that she hasn’t yet had time to fully address how the library services are being used by teachers.

**Observation – Technology Audit**

1. Hardware—we have 10 Dell PCs with Pentium processors. They are not used at all. The librarian has one computer.
2. Software—there is no special software.
3. Databases—we have no databases for ES students.

Communications (Newsletters, blogs, wikis, email distributions lists, Facebook pages, and more)—none

1. Internet access—the OPAC is available as a link from the school website (www.bbs.edu.kw) or through its own link (http://library.bbs.edu.kw).
2. Access to policies, documents, and guidelines related to technology, especially Acceptable Use Policy or Internet Use Policy—nothing is in place regarding the AUP or IUP.
3. Access to documents or policies on Internet safety or digital citizenship (other than AUP or IUP)—nothing.
4. Technology planning documentation—nothing.
5. Technology-related professional development—I took part in a school-wide Google Group discussion for professional development this year.
6. School Web site URL features: www.bbs.edu.kw
7. Library Web site URL and features: None
8. Any cool stuff? No.

**Overarching Question:**

How are these tools and resources being using for learning and teaching through the library program?

The program is very traditional, with the librarian working with elementary teachers on a fixed schedule. She has made marked improvement from the way that the library used to be run. For example, students have personal choice in book selection and are allowed to browse the stacks. The way she is using the technology is to catch up on cataloging that had not been done for the past 20 years. Her primary concern is making the books and information accessible first to teachers, and then to students. There are frustrations with the time spent on cataloging that are compounded by weaknesses in the Symphony Work Flows. It is inefficient and adds time to the cataloging process, of which there is precious little. The librarian has taken deliberate steps to make the system work for her by manipulating tags and creating collections. She has also re-shelved many of the books to reflect these new collections. Overall, she has made great strides in helping teachers to have better access to the resources they need. As far as making resources available to the students electronically, the librarian feels it would not benefit the students right now, as the interface is not developmentally appropriate for elementary school students. She does not plan to do any instruction in library searching skills. The 10 computers for students are not being used.